NUCLEAR NIRVANA . . *R. D. Lakin*

THE NATION

SEPTEMBER 29, 1962 . . 25c

New York City

Reform Politics: a Biopsy

Blanche D. Blank

St. Petersburg, Fla.

POSSE for a VIRUS

David Binder

Cuba

INVITATION to DISASTER

Ronald Hilton

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LETTERS

Puerto Rico

Dear Sirs: I was most interested in "Puerto Rico: Plebiscite for Identity," by Carey McWilliams, in your Sept. 15 issue. I fully agree that a plebiscite is as important for us as it is for the Puerto Ricans. But how many Congressmen know and respect Puerto Rico? . . . We have been going there regularly for the last six years and the island has become for us an inspiration. One finds there racial equality, the flowering of the cooperative idea (especially in housing), the stupendous "Operation Bootstrap." (We had a mural created by Mariana von Allesch for the outside of our studio, depicting the three major reasons of our love for Puerto Rico: the sun, the Casals Festivals and "Operation Bootstrap.") Neither in Statehood nor in Independence is there any guarantee for the development, or even the continuation, of the island's truly social-democratic programs, and this is why I do not see how any Puerto Rican worker in his senses can oppose the Commonwealth goal of the Popular Democratic Party. ANNOT JACOBI
Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.

Dear Sirs: Re Mr. McWilliams' article: All sovereignty over Puerto Rico is invested in the U.S. Congress. We Puerto Ricans are prohibited by law to use the services of merchant vessels of foreign nationality to transport our imports and exports to the United States. We are under obligatory military service under a Congressional law in which we Puerto Ricans did not have anything to say. We have a Resident Commissioner in the House of Representatives of the United States who has no vote, and can speak only when allowed to do so by the unanimous vote of the Representatives. We are allowed to refine only 12 per cent of the sugar we produce; the rest is refined in the States. Seventy-eight per cent of the industrial and commercial investments in the island are in the hands of North American investors; only 22 per cent in the hands of Puerto Ricans. We have a federal court here whose proceedings are carried out in English, a foreign language to us. The decisions of our so-called supreme court can be revoked by the U.S. Supreme Court. The FBI is rampant here and interferes with our local police. The U.S. Armed Forces can expropiate any land they wish without paying for it (already they have expropriated more than 80,000 acres). One-third of our population has been compelled to emigrate to the continent for lack of employment.

If Independence does not have a large group of followers, it is because its supporters are persecuted and slandered both by the local police and by the FBI. In the sixty-four years of American occupation, there has been a veritable brainwashing in our schools to dissuade our youth from *Independista* feelings. . . . CARMEN L. CASTRO
San Juan, P.R.

Servant of Politics

Dear Sirs: Carl Dreher's article ["Wrong Way to the Moon," Sept. 15] seems to treat only briefly a very important relationship between science and politics.

Since industrialization, science has been a servant of the industrial state. The political relationships between states determines the amount of scientific cooperation. To say that such cooperation may be helped by political agreement, as Mr. Dreher stated, is misleading; it depends *entirely* upon political agreement. Scientists would do better today to consider a solution to the political barriers preventing a free exchange of ideas and information between the United States and the USSR, rather than tax their wits trying to cooperate in the midst of political hostility. DAVID WUCHINICH
Mt. Kisco, N.Y.

Peace Candidates

Dear Sirs: I was delighted to read your fine appraisal of H. Stuart Hughes [*The Nation*, Sept. 22]. I suggest that all peace groups and those in favor of Mr. Hughes's policies band together in financial support to aid his campaign for the Senate. This might serve to influence the independent voters, or those who, while admiring Hughes, believe he has no chance of being elected. EVELYN U. SCHMITT
Miami, Fla.

Dear Sirs: It is hard to see how any number of "peace candidates" ("Peace Takes to the Hustings," July 28, and "Hughes for the Senate," Sept. 22) can make much more of a contribution to peace than the liberal Democrats and Republicans already in Congress (which is to say, just about none). These peace candidates, if elected, are going to grow old trying to get past the roadblocks set up by old-guard Republicans and their Dixiecrat allies among Democrats. . . .

Liberals tend wistfully to regret that the Southern Negro is deprived of his vote, but they generally feel this is his grief rather than their own, and that they have more urgent things to worry about; such as the threat of war. They overlook the support all war parties are receiving from the same powers who oppress the Negro. . . . The fastest way to achieve liberal goals on any front might be to press for greater Negro enfranchisement in the South, and liberation of both national parties from Dixiecrat manipulation. SHELBY COOPER
New York City

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The Nation, Sept. 29, 1962. Vol. 195, No. 9

The Nation published weekly (except in July and August, when biweekly) by The Nation Company and copyright 1962 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N.Y. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Tel.: CH 2-8400.

Subscription Price Domestic—One year $8, Two years $14, Three years $20. Additional postage per year: Foreign and Canadian $1.

Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1962
VOLUME 195, No. 9

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

'Do Something!'

The pressures on the President to act still more forcibly in Cuba are not likely to decrease; on the contrary, everything—including the resolution passed last week by Congress—points to their augmentation. "In the absence of a more positive policy," *Time* (September 21) editorializes, "there was increasing talk about a solid rock upon which current U.S. action against Cuba might be based." *Time* then takes a deep breath and lets fly with an oratorical one-sentence paragraph: "The rock is the Monroe Doctrine." (See also: "Cuba: Invitation to Disaster," page 171.)

Time then goes on for five solid pages to expound the doctrine for the benefit of ordinary Americans, most of whom, it says correctly, have only the foggiest notion of what it says and means. When *Time* gets through, the fog is still more dense, for *Time* omits the crucial point about the Monroe Doctrine. At the time of its promulgation, it offered a *quid pro quo* for the inhibition of European colonization in the Americas. Walter Lippmann points out in the New York *Herald Tribune* (September 18) that the American claim for the isolation of the Western Hemisphere "was coupled with a renunciation of American interest in the Eastern Hemisphere." Lippmann quotes: "In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so." We would keep off their doorstep and they must keep off ours. That policy did not originate with Monroe, but with George Washington. This basis of the Monroe Doctrine, as *The Nation* pointed out editorially in its issue of September 15, disappeared with the Second World War. Lippmann dates its inapplicability earlier, but arrives at the same conclusion: "We cannot invoke the Monroe Doctrine without meeting the question of what we are doing all over Europe and Asia."

One could go still further. In the twentieth century the doctrine, even if it were still legally and morally enforceable, is insufferable to the Latin Americans and in no small measure is responsible for our troubles in this hemisphere. The fact is that by excluding other influences we have made ourselves Latin America's Big Brother, and we are resented as we deserve. The resentment is diplomatically concealed in view of American promises of aid in staving off revolution, but even the rich Latin Americans do not like the idea of American suzerainty over the hemisphere. "The flaw in American policy," Tom Stacey writes in the *Sunday Times* (London) after a visit to Latin America, ". . . is that it does not take into sufficient account the basic psychological component of inter-American tension — namely, that Latin America, at a certain deep level of mind, resists any vision for its future concocted in Washington." At the same time *The Wall Street Journal* reports a massive reluctance on the part of Latin American nations to follow the United States in punitive measures against Castro.

These are facts which the "do something" brigade chooses to ignore — but they remain facts. It is also a fact that precisely because Castro is weakening, the Soviet Union is trying to shore up his regime with materiel and technicians. But unless the President and his spokesmen — Bowles, Clark, Humphrey, et al. — take the initiative and hold it, they may find themselves, as well as the country, in irremediable trouble. The President cannot continue to carry water on both shoulders. The Cuban *émigrés* whom he encourages will take matters into their own hands. They are talking of torpedoing a Soviet freighter, and they are perfectly capable of this or some equally insane catalytic action. Then neither Kennedy nor Khrushchev may be able to control the situation.

Dragon's Teeth

U.S. policy in Southeast Asia and, for that matter, in other parts of this world which is no longer wide, has been to make an ally of any miscreant as long as he was anti-Communist, and then to provide him with munificent subsidies and military and propaganda services. Occasionally, also, a reputable regime has been the recipient of our bounty; we are not particular. But, whatever the character of the beneficiary, the general effect has been to speed up the militarization of the area and to make all concerned sore at Uncle Sam. Thus Pakistan blames us for furnishing materiel to

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India, and India for aiding Pakistan. The same situation is now arising in the chief trouble spot of Southeast Asia — the Vietnam-Laos-Cambodia-Thailand quadrangle.

Cambodia has not been one of our favorites; its stipends have been a mere token handout, compared with the billions poured into South Vietnam. Nor, from a cold-war standpoint, has Cambodia been deserving of real largess. Its chief of state, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, has been an avowed neutralist and was one of the engineers of the tripartite *modus vivendi* which, at least for the time being, ended the civil war in Laos. Lying between Thailand (ruled by the pro-West military dictator Marshal Sarit Thanarat) and South Vietnam (ruled by the even more ardent Ngo Dinh Diem), Cambodia has been accused of allowing aid to reach the allegedly Communist Vietcong guerrillas. Sihanouk himself sent his son to school in Moscow. Cambodia and its chief of state are scarcely paladins of the anti-communism crusade to which the United States has dedicated itself.

Yet, fresh from the halls of the dedicated Ngo Dinh Diem, Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, chairman-designate of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, flew to Phnom Penh, the Cambodian seat of government, to confer with the heretical Sihanouk. The reason was plain. Sihanouk had not only been griping about American aid to South Vietnam and Thailand; he had been threatening to seek aid from Red China unless Cambodia's independence and neutrality — now threatened, he contends, by Thailand and South Vietnam — were guaranteed by the Great Powers. And, since South Vietnam is receiving American military aid without stint or limit — to all intents and purposes we are belligerents there — Sihanouk demands military aid too, so that he can guarantee his own independence and neutrality. Almost synchronously with General Taylor's arrival, Cambodia did receive a dozen North American T-28 fighter-bomber training planes, programed some twelve to eighteen months earlier. But Sihanouk wants more.

From Phnom Penh, General Taylor flew to Banghok, where Marshal Sarit received him with the cordiality of a middle-aged wife whose husband has just brought home a chorus girl as a permanent companion. General Taylor assured Marshal Sarit that it was nothing, that the Cambodian aircraft would never be used against good old Thailand. Marshal Sarit disagreed, as did other members of his government. "If this goes on long enough," said Interior Minister Praphas Charusathien, "we will become disgusted."

Perhaps disgusted himself, General Taylor flew on to Jakarta, Indonesia. What the future holds in Southeast Asia no man can say — except that the sowing of the dragon's teeth will continue, and the American taxpayer will continue to pay.

The Great God Profit

A great nation can become trapped in an obsolete ideology as fatally as a beaver can get caught in a trap. In our business-oriented culture, it is assumed that if a profit can be made in anything, it is somehow immoral not to make it. It is this snare that has got us off to a wrong start with the astronauts, the foremost national heroes of our day, and that will cause increasing embarrassment not only in astronautics, but in all branches of government as the space program develops.

The government made the initial mistake with the original group of astronauts when it permitted them to sell their stories to Time, Inc. under a $500,000 contract. When the real-estate brokers and developers of Houston, Texas, followed up this deal by trying to give the astronauts split-level or ranch-type houses, complete with appliances, it was a little too much. At that time, that is; as things are going, such tie-ups may become quite tolerable. Like movie actors, the astronauts may be permitted to endorse General Motors cars or Chesterfield cigarettes or Schick razor blades. It is not such a far cry from the first group's investment of their funds in the plushiest motel in Cocoa Beach, to the sort of commercialization which has become routine in other branches of public life.

When the astronauts' deal with Time, Inc. was made, some key officials in the space program were strongly opposed. The President himself, shortly after he took office, was reported to have expressed his displeasure over this permissive policy. Yet when the question arose once more with the selection of a new group of astronauts, neither he nor the Space Administration could find a better solution than a set of regulations which can be circumvented by any adviser capable of passing the bar examinations. According to a story by John W. Finney in the September 16 *New York Times*, some of the astronauts themselves were active in influencing the final decision, which overrode the "unfortunate" air of commercialism pervading a national effort whose goal is national prestige and which is supported by all the nation's taxpayers.

Finney's informants state further that the Kennedy Administration "was influenced by the consideration that the astronauts, who receive roughly $10,000 a year in military pay, were grossly underpaid for their hazardous missions and therefore should be permitted to supplement their salaries." One might as well say that Nathan Hale was grossly underpaid for giving his life for his country — or any officer or draftee who may be killed in combat or by accident in the service. If any of the astronauts lose their lives, it will be as volunteers for hazardous duty in the service of their country, and their widows and children will be supported, educated and otherwise provided for in ac-

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cordance with existing law. If these provisions are inadequate, the Congress and the President can augment them, but the United States presents a sorry picture to the world when its most publicized and most honored government employees are encouraged to make a fast buck by orbiting the earth or flying to the moon.

How to Succeed in Business

Conflicts of interest involving patriots who oscillate between "private" defense business and the government are chronic and may be regarded as inherent in the nature of our military-industrial setup. Senator J. Glenn Beall (R., Md.) called attention to a particularly juicy one in the *Congressional Record* of September 11. Senator Beall quoted in its entirety an article by Howard Norton in the Baltimore *Sun*. Writing from Washington, Norton asserted that "a former high Navy official has set up shop here to represent a defense contractor with whom this same official negotiated a big contract for the Navy only last spring." It is in a sense a success story. The defense contractor is the Franklin Intitute of Philadelphia, known chiefly in less palmy days as a commemorative body for American science and the custodian of a scientific museum. The high Navy official is a former insurance adjuster in Florida. He rose in the world as administrative assistant to Rep. Paul C. Rogers, also of Florida. When the Democrats came in, Robinson, the ex-insurance adjuster, was appointed Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research and Development.

Everybody knows that the conventional business of educational institutions, viz. education, is now rivaled or exceeded in importance by work in weapons development for the Department of Defense. The Franklin Institute also entered this burgeoning field. For some twenty years the Massachusetts Institute of Technology had been doing work for the Navy in weapons evaluation and analysis. For various reasons Robinson, as special assistant in the field, began to look around for another contractor to take over part of this work. The Franklin Institute was no great shakes in this line while M.I.T. was and is, but Robinson felt that the institute could serve the Navy effectively and negotiated a contract with it.

According to Norton, the cost to the government will be higher than under the arrangement with M.I.T. Be that as it may, Robinson, upon completion of the negotiations, promptly resigned. With what Norton seems to regard as unseemly haste, Robinson then became assistant to Francis L. Jackson, director of the Franklin Intitute, the very man with whom he had negotiated the contract. So now Robinson's salary, and presumably Jackson's, in large part is being paid by the Navy through the Franklin Institute.

An official of the institute explained that it needed Robinson "because of his extensive knowledge of the workings of the Navy hierarchy and because of the Franklin Institute's lack of experience in this field." This has the virtue of frankness, at least. What Benjamin Franklin would think of the whole affair can only be conjectured.

Cuba: INVITATION TO DISASTER . . *by Ronald Hilton*

AS AMERICAN citizens, we have a prime responsibility to defend this country. To assume, however, that this means that we must immediately invade Cuba or obliterate that small republic is to put ourselves on the same intellectual level as the Latin Americans who believe that they are satisfying their honor if they kill their political adversary. Yet we have reached a collective frame of mind in which it is considered un-American to counsel prudence.

Being a good American may require the use of force, just as in World Wars I and II it was right for Britain to confront the tyranny of Germany. One does not have to be a pacifist to say that America should in its own interest pursue a policy based on a realistic assessment of the situation and seek a lasting rather than a temporary solution.

It may be true that the only lesson we learn from history is that we learn nothing from it. Yet the atmosphere today is strikingly similar to that preceding 1898, when the Hearst and Pulitzer press both stimulated and echoed the demands that the United States invade Cuba. President McKinley was at first hesitant, but public opinion pushed him to an act which has had repercussions down to the present day. It is the general Cuban thesis that the United States entered that war at the last minute to seize the spoils and to create a colonial economy subject to the United States. Since Fidel Castro is the end product of the process set off in 1898, it seems — with the advantage that hindsight gives us — that the decision to go to war then may not have been in the best long-run interests of this country. Certainly the image of the United States suffered sharply because of the 1898 invasion; the hostility which plagues us in Latin America developed largely from Teddy Roosevelt's "splendid little war." Madison Avenue surely cannot approve of such ventures.

The proponents of direct action

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against Castro cover quite a prism of ideas. At one extreme, Senator Homer Capehart (R., Ind.), who is not widely known for sagacity in international affairs, has long advocated invasion, as has Senator Strom Thurmond (D., S.C.). Senator Thomas J. Dodd (D., Conn.) proposes to use a foreign legion, a rather discredited military invention. Senator George Smathers (D., Fla.) prefers to talk about a NATO-type force. Senator John G. Tower (R., Tex.) wants to try the Bay of Pigs gambit again, but bigger and better. Senator Barry Goldwater (R., Ariz.) demands a blockade, without specifying what we would do if the Russians made the blockade a *casus belli*. [See editorial, 'Do Something!', page 169.]

President Kennedy and Senator Wayne Morse have strongly urged prudence before unleashing a bloody war, but it is hard to find a Congressman who has pointed out that, so long as we maintain aggressive bases in places like Formosa and Turkey, it is morally impossible for us to object on ethical grounds to what the Russians do in Cuba. Senator J. William Fulbright (D., Ark.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a man of far wider vision than most of his colleagues, realizes that this is so, but he has felt compelled to express himself discreetly. Many statesmen, however, have gone so far as to point out that Cuba is simply one piece of a larger international situation and that the Cuban crisis cannot be resolved in isolation.

WE should have learned from Indochina and Algeria that one cannot sit on bayonets and that public opinion in the world and in Cuba must be taken into account. One learns little about world opinion from the Russian press, the Cuban press or the American press. We may look at the press of the Western allies of the United States for what is presumably the most pro-American interpretation to be found (the neutralist press of, say, Egypt or India will certainly be less pro-American). It is hard to find a single Western newspaper, even among those given to heckling the United States, prepared to say a good word for the Soviet venture in Cuba. The liberal *Manchester Guardian*, which frequently seems anti-American, in its editorial of September 12, entitled "Fishing in Troubled Waters," says that Khrushchev's recent statements on Cuba have been quite unconvincing. Low has a cartoon showing a tank marked with a hammer and sickle and the label "Cuba: Technical Personnel." The tank has knocked down a barbed-wire fence and the sign "Monroe Doctrine." A Russian soldier and Castro are looking out of the tank turret. Castro remarks: "The Americans? pah! They will stand anything." The caption reads "Famous Last Words." Low, a liberal, fears that an irresponsible Castro and a determined Russia may touch off a holocaust.

WHILE the liberal press speaks without sympathy of Russia, the conservative press finds it hard to muster any respect for the American position. Senator Fulbright probably spoke for only a minority of Americans when he told Robert Taylor of the Washington *Star*: "Those 'superpatriots' who get so concerned about what the Russians are doing [in Cuba] ignore completely that we are doing the same thing in many parts of the world." Yet this viewpoint is common outside the United States. The Monroe Doctrine is a shibboleth in the United States, but Hiram Bingham's title *The Monroe Doctrine — an Obsolete Shibboleth* would seem to make sense to anyone but an American.* The conservative *Daily Telegraph* of September 10, in an editorial entitled "Rocking Chair Diplomacy," says: "America really abandoned the Monroe Doctrine when she entered the Second World War."

A double standard may seem proper to the Americans, but it makes little sense to anyone else. No European will accept the theory that Cuba and Berlin are unrelated issues. A European is disturbed when he reads in the *U.S. News & World Report* of September 17: "*War*, in the end, may be forced as the answer, *not big war*, not world war, but full-scale invasion" (as though it would be an American decision to circumscribe the field of combat). Obviously recommending that the United States risk a war over Cuba, *Time* magazine said on September 14: "It may come to this — the United States could get the job done itself, once and for all." Since *U.S. News & World Report* and *Time* express the viewpoint of conservative American capitalism, such a statement shakes the confidence of the world in the global vision of American business.

In an editorial entitled "Cuba: Another Spain?" the Toronto *Globe and Mail* of September 4 said:

> The announcement in Moscow that the Soviet Government has agreed to meet the requests of the Cuban Government for military and economic aid can be expected to give new impetus to the rising hysteria about Cuba among some sections of opinion in the United States. It will provide more ammunition for the irresponsible politicians in the U.S. Senate and elsewhere who are already demanding military action to wipe out communism in Cuba.

The *Globe and Mail* suggests that, unless the United States shows prudence, Cuba may spark World War III just as Spain sparked World War II. The newspaper believes that the war psychosis characteristic of America today is reminiscent of 1898:

> All the incidents of recent days, in fact, add up to very little when examined calmly. The situation in Cuba has not markedly changed, and the United States is no more threatened than it was months ago. Taken together and exaggerated, however, the incidents can be made to appear alarming.

AS FOR Latin America, we should scarcely regard as *vox populi* the demand of the Somoza dictatorship that the United States initiate military action against Cuba. Throughout Latin America there has been an almost complete disillusionment with Castro among the middle classes with which Americans are in touch. It would seem, however, that among the peasant groups, whose voice is scarcely heard, the prestige of Castro is still quite high. A disillusionment with Castro does not in any case mean enthusiasm for the United States or for U.S. police actions. The

*Senator Bingham once said that he never lived down the title of that book.

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general feeling is "A plague on both your houses" — which of course was the attitude of the United States toward foreign disputants until World War II. The *U.S. News & World Report* of September 17 confirmed this in an article entitled "Count Me Out." One manifestation of this attitude is to be seen in the growth of the nonintervention policy — the so-called Estrada doctrine — which seems at present to be the principal preoccupation of Latin American governments. If any kind of intromission into the affairs of Latin American republics is permitted, they argue, the door may be opened to a series of U.S. interventions south of the border. This obsession has almost paralyzed inter-American diplomatic relations.

One result is that the Organization of American States (OAS) has become virtually inoperative. The United States would like to work through the OAS, but finds it almost impossible to do so. As *U.S. News & World Report* said on September 17: "Will OAS, the hemispheric United Nations, come to U.S. aid? Not a chance. OAS, like the U.N., is a combination debating and social organization." The OAS is generally discredited. The attempts of Venezuela and the United States to get the OAS to do something about the wave of military coups in Latin America have failed dismally.

IN A LONG and carefully prepared speech before the Senate on September 19, Senator Dodd expressed the common American viewpoint that we should try to work through the OAS, but, if the OAS proves to be an inadequate instrument, we should go it alone. He quotes Salvador de Madariaga's demand in *Between the Bear and the Eagle* for forceful action against Castro:

> I believe that the proposal of Professor de Madariaga for collective action by the Organization of American States in support of Cuban freedom is the ideal for which we should strive. But if such action cannot be organized, if our Latin American friends continue to shilly-shally, then, as President Kennedy suggested in his historic speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors after the Bay of Pigs disaster, we must be prepared to act alone in support of the Cuban people.

S. F. Chronicle

Senator Keating (R., N.Y.) rushed to express his support for Senator Dodd's "six-point plan of action." Their speeches together confirm the belief that the most violent anti-Castro feeling is to be found in New York — the focal point of U.S. financial interests. Unfortunately for him, Senator Dodd's speech did not carry much conviction, since his support of dictators like Franco has disqualified him in the eyes of most serious Western observers. It should be pointed out parenthically that (ex-) Professor Salvador de Madariaga is no longer really a liberal and that his biography of Bolivar revealed him to be a man who was out of touch with the dynamics of Latin American history. In brief, the attitude toward the OAS is one of impatience in the United States and of distrust or indifference in Latin America.

THE feeling of hostile neutrality in Latin America is heightened by the well-documented belief there that the aim of the United States, through inter-American organizations and programs, is to strengthen military regimes which hopefully will provide the United States with what Colombians are now calling "sepoys." Despite the objections of some of the major Latin American powers, the United States has pushed through its plan for an Inter-American Defense College, now established at Fort McNair, Washington. The Commandant is General Thomas Van Natta of the United States. Only Washington stupidity or a deliberate desire to offend could have led to the appointment of General Juan Esteban Aguirre of Paraguay as Assistant Commandant. If we are governed by an establishment which does not realize the implications of giving such a high post to a representative of the Stroessner dictatorship, we have lost the struggle for men's minds. However much we may dislike Castro, the fact is that if the common people of Latin America, indeed of the world, have to choose between Stroessner and Castro, they will choose Castro.

IT IS extraordinarily difficult to assess Cuban public opinion. Both the American and Cuban press are useless in this regard. Since in recent weeks the Cuban Government has become almost paranoic (or, as the Cuban regime would claim, realistic) in its fear of spies, European newsmen have been harassed, and the European press has ceased to provide an objective account of Cuban public opinion. (Latin American public opinion is volatile and voluble; and, even with good information, does not easily lend itself to accurate characterization.) Yet we feel fairly safe in saying that, at this juncture, only a small minority of Cubans in Cuba would accept Senator Dodd's branding of Castro as the Cuban Quisling. The recent war scare has undoubtedly enhanced his prestige in the island. All the reports we have received at the Stanford offices of the *Hispanic American Report* suggest that the estimate given by Professor Samuel Shapiro in his article "Cuba Today" (*The Nation*, September 22, 1962) is correct. It dovetails perfectly with the report sent to us by a young French scientist who recently visited Cuba.

Whether it is a good or a bad thing, whether we like it or not, Fidel Castro still holds the imagination of the Cuban masses. His regime has more popular support than those of most of the other Latin American Caribbean republics. We should bear this in mind when we calculate the

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prospects for the outcome of an invasion of Cuba.

Professor David D. Burks of the University of Michigan (Dearborn Center) thinks the Castro regime is here to stay, at least for some time:

> Articles based on the imminent collapse of Castro are false optimism. Should he fail to reach the economic gains promised to the Cuban people — and manage to blame the failure on the U.S. — economic adversity could make the people even more loyal. If he succeeds (with help from the Communist countries and good sugar production), he will have a Socialistic showcase in the Western Hemisphere. If this happens, he will be in power for a long time.

Burks believes that the United States and Castro may find an accommodation within the next two or three years. While Russia wishes to keep its hold on Cuba as a counter-threat to Berlin, there are abundant signs that Russia does not want to go to war over Cuba and would indeed be happy if Castro and the United States would come to an agreement. In view of this, the policy of President Kennedy is prudent and well advised, even if it does not appear to have the vote-getting appeal of the theatrics of the politicians who want direct and violent action.

As *The New York Times* said in a September 6 editorial, "An aggression by Cuba, either against the United States or another Latin American country, would be suicidal, and hence is not to be expected." Even though Cubans may be prepared to die for Castro, they realize that Senator Clair Engle of California was speaking realistically when he said that the United States has the power to blow the top off Cuba. The United States and Russia likewise realize that in the succeeding few hours, the top might be blown off the United States and the Soviet Union.

On balance, therefore, it would seem that the course of action—or, as his critics would say, inaction — plotted by President Kennedy and his Administration is in the best interests of the United States and of humanity. It is un-American to make it appear that it is un-American. No apologies need be made for it. Should the enemies of the Administration choose to make a propaganda issue of it, they may be sure that they will have neither the facts, nor the opinion of humanity, nor the past, nor the future on their side. A decision to launch or not to launch a war requires sober reflection and not the political vituperation which may be properly used only in denouncing scalawags or fools. Those who counsel prudence in the Cuban issue are neither. At least as much as their adversaries, they place America first.

REFORM POLITICS: a Biopsy . . *by Blanche D. Blank*

THE REFORM movement of the New York City Democratic Party is part of a national groundswell that is particularly noticeable in the major parties of the large urban centers of California, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and, of course, New York. Because New York City is so pivotal politically, the vicissitudes of its "new politics" have certain important implications for the country as a whole.

Just a year ago the New York City reform movement (roughly identified as those Democratic clubs belonging to the Committee for Democratic Voters (CDV), a sort of reform holding company under the spiritual and material aegis of ex-Governor Herbert Lehman, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and other prominent figures) rose to undreamed-of heights when it helped elect a Mayor free from any vestige of "regular" support, won seven out of eight City Council contests, fourteen out of sixteen district leadership battles, and brought itself to within one vote of majority control of the N.Y. County Executive Committee of the party. But two weeks ago, these same forces suffered such heavy casualties in another city-wide primary that people are wondering if the movement has aborted. Out of forty important contests for Democratic nominations in which recognized reform factions had entered candidates there were thirty-three defeats.

What many observers consider a death-rattle, however, is more likely to be a metamorphosis. The widely dispersed aims and personalities within this loose reform coalition will now be forced publicly to face up to what has long been a self-defeating ambivalence in their ranks. Their very success has sown the seeds of this crippling cleavage; and their extravagant rhetoric no longer disguises the ambiguities and contradictions of their present position. The confusion between public relations and public relationships, between Madison and Madison Avenue, between ideas and ideologies, must now be cleared away if the entire movement is not to be lost.

The recent electoral debacle will probably compel a separation between those members to whom public policy and effective political action are most important, and those to whom reshaping the party is the primary and exclusive goal. The first group will consist of people who value their identity as Democrats above their title as Reformers. They will probably form a *rapprochment* rallying around such leaders as Edward Costikyan (New York County Democratic Leader), James Lanigan (the Greenwich Village District Leader who last year defeated De Sapio for this post, and who this year defected from the reform club that sponsored him in order to support a "DeSapio man"), and perhaps Robert Morgenthau (the new guber-

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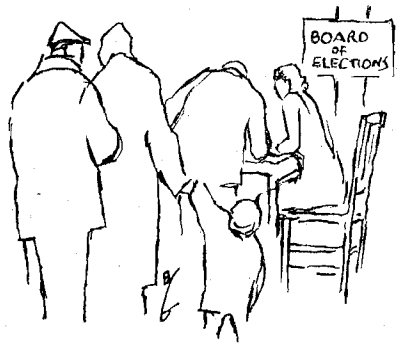
natorial candidate). These men can best be labeled "small r" reformers. They will concentrate their energies — as they have throughout the brief history of the movement — on making the party more respectable in tone to the newly emerging middle class of New York City, and more responsive in substance to the basic *policy* liberalism which they hold to be important.

The second faction in the predicted split will consist of those who wish to cling primarily to their identity as Reformers. For them, procedural purity in intra-club politics is the all-engaging goal. They will of necessity dissolve into more parochial pressure-style groups, focusing their attention, on a somewhat *ad hoc* basis, on occasional candidates and on achieving isolated islands of party purity.

BOTH groups, however, will continue to have an influence on the Democratic Party for some time. The moderate reformers (whom their more militant colleagues will accuse of selling out to the "organization") will remain divorced from a majority of the "regulars" by their continued association with such reform planks as complete disclosure of all party financial records; elimination of "no-show" patronage jobs; full disclosure of all court patronage; use of newsletters, forums and other devices to keep close contact with their constituents. These reformers will also leave the superficial mark that accompanies a Brooks Brothers suit and a Harvard accent, as well as the more substantial influence of their generally liberal views. The more militant Reformers will have their most important effect in their role as guardians of the political paradise. They will continue to be the moral gadflies of the Democratic organization. Their prominently displayed purity in such matters as patronage should improve the entire tenor of the party. To the degree that they continue to contest low-visibility posts in the party, they will also serve to stimulate the interest of the general electorate. Indeed, the most impressive victory the reformers won in this last primary was their triumph against apathy — half a million votes in an "off-year" battle is quite unusual.

The necessity for some reshuffling of the reform movement in New York City has been burgeoning for some time. The seams of the CDV have been visibly bursting from the strain of retaining two somewhat antithetical philosophies (to say nothing of personalities) in one rather leaky container. The degree to which members of this new politics succeeded as reformers was the degree to which they failed as politicians, and vice versa. Reform mythology contends, for example, that the true believer



can always be distinguished by his concern for social issues rather than personal rewards — by his willingness to take the reform vows of abstinence (from patronage) and obedience (to the rank and file). Certain difficulties immediately reveal themselves:

1. The split over patronage.

The acceptance of patronage has long proved a bone of contention among reform elements. There are at least five top reform leaders who have accepted it, and no more than two who have unequivocally refused it. There are others who take an uncertain posture. It is hard, for instance, to decide when patronage ceases to be patronage and becomes public service. Is a *high* political appointment less tainted than an unimportant post? After all, it is only through the prominent public offices (many of which are politically appointed) that substantive policy goals can be achieved. On the other hand, is it essentially "just" to cut off effective party work from those members whose pocketbooks cannot finance it and whose marginal jobs cannot support the time expenditures required? Will there be sufficient reservoirs of *disinterested* dollars to underwrite the steadily increasing costs of mass-media campaigns? (Mayor Wagner's last primary effort alone cost over $500,000). The moderate reformers are willing to make certain concessions to practical necessity here, although they will still abstain from the use of sinecure-style patronage and blatantly venal abuses of political power.

2. The split over internal procedural democratic reforms.

There is also a very basic cleavage in the Democratic reform movement over the need to maintain complete internal democracy within each club, as against the need to maintain a certain freedom and flexibility for the party's leadership. In American politics in general, and in New York State in particular, compromise and brokerage, far from being anathema, are the very lifeblood of the system. All public offices above Assemblyman in this state, for example, have constituencies that transcend the district lines of any one club. There must, consequently, be enough flexibility to trade —to make deals, if you will—in order to insure victory. The failure of any particular group to seize this opportunity merely allows for the rise of another faction that will surely operate the laws of mathematical probability to their own advantage. The same story is true of convention politics. Resistance to making commitments *ahead* of the actual convention (in obedience to the higher principle of rank-and-file consultation and instruction) finally dooms the adamant Reformer to the role of an eloquent but ineffective onlooker, while the slate and policy decisions will be made by those who are flexible enough to bargain and powerful enough to deliver any votes or services they commit.

That completely *responsive* leadership is not always completely *responsible* leadership is a lesson the moderate reformers seem willing to learn. Perhaps this *rapprochement* group (which coincidentally finds its largest following among those reform clubs in the city where there is a more affluent and more business-oriented membership) recognizes that a leader can and should

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accept a general direction from his constituency, but cannot — if he wishes to be effective — accept a continuous litany of detailed instructions.

3. Ideals and ideologies in the reform movement.

There is still another dimension to this cleavage within the Democratic reform movement that is almost schizophrenic in its implications. There have been a number of studies that indicate the ideological bent, the issue-orientation, of most reformers. At bottom, such personalities are unlikely to be fundamentally democratic. They are more likely to be benevolent despots. To them, the good life, the patron saint or the devil, has been clearly revealed and their basic instinct is to bring this light with disciple-like zeal to the uninitiated. Such a calling is certainly in the mainstream of American Reform, which has almost invariably rallied around either a magnetic personality embodying some ideal (a Teddy Roosevelt, Seth Low or LaGuardia) or some evil (a boss Croker or DeSapio); or around some highly specific goal (prohibition, the secret ballot, the direct primary, civil-service reform). The mass entree into *this* reform movement, too, came from the huge cadre of New Yorkers who were transfixed by Stevenson. Their moment of greatest victory also came when they were transfixed by DeSapio. Once the *cause célèbre* disappears, there is a general let-down of spirit and activity. Such inclinations are diametrically opposed, of course, to the core of the democratic process, which emphasizes means rather than ends; and to the core of the Democratic Party as well, which emphasizes year-round steady work rather than sporadic outbursts.

Moreover, the rigid insistence of the militant Reformers upon procedurally democratic club rules is belied by their own essentially elitist membership. The purists in the new politics, far more than the moderates, fail to note that they may be (as a club or a group of clubs) singularly removed from the over-all constituency of the Democratic Party — and even from the enrolled party members in their own districts. The reform movement is almost exclusively a middle-class movement, while the Democratic Party is still primarily the party of the lower classes. The value systems of the underprivileged are virtually estranged from those of the middle class.

This gap between democratic myth and reality is particularly apparent when a reform club succeeds in electing a county committeeman or a district leader. The New York Election Law makes such party officers the representatives at various county-wide meetings of all the enrolled party voters from their districts. If a club, open to all though it may be, does not in fact truly encompass or represent such a population group, then its efforts at forcing its own will (no matter how democratically demonstrated at the club) upon the party functionary is simply another form of elitism. Indeed, one may reasonably ask whether it is fundamentally possible for those reformers who are merely *for* the people but not *of* them, to maintain any sustained political leadership at the grass-roots level. The essentially middle-class virtues of the reformers — to say nothing of their middle-class style — may actually in the long run alienate them from what is still the supporting majority of the Democratic voters in this city.

ONCE again, the moderate strain in the reform movement has to some degree come to grips with at least a part of this problem by catering to a certain amount of ethnic balance and ethnic sensitivity in their districts. Failure to do so on the part of other reform clubs has given rise to the charge that such clubs are nothing more than vehicles for the ascendance of one particular group — the Jewish middle-class intellectuals who dominate most of the clubs in New York City.

It is also the moderate reformers who clearly understand the ironic impossibility of imposing ethical absolutes on politicians who must operate in a climate where both virtue and vice are viewed, of necessity, as ambiguous. To begin with, American public officials play out their roles in a system that is deliberately structured to dissipate strength. In a government fragmented by federalism and separated powers, many men make one decision and one man makes many decisions. Under a political creed that views all men as politically equal, a politician's choice is generally not one between good and evil, but rather one between different sets of self-seeking individuals or groups. The clearer moral vision of the Pure Reformers can exist only when distilled from the continuous exigencies of mass politics.

The high turnover in party officers, club officers, candidates and rank-and-file membership, along with the suicidal internecine struggles that have bedeviled the reform movement, give rise to one final question: whether or not the "true" reformer is by his very nature a "loner." Is he, perhaps, an egoist whose own sense of personal worthiness is undermined by another's rise to prominence? Is he therefore constitutionally unable to work for another man's success unless that man stands at a very great social or political distance from him? Is he allergic to the team spirit of politics? The history of the reform movement in New York City is replete with tales of backbiting and personal bickering camouflaged by a thin veneer of "principles." Among the Pure Reformers, the sin of personal venality may have simply given way to that of personal pride. In any event, whatever the psychological or structural forces that deter teamwork, this failing is fatal to political effectiveness — and the moderates in the movement have already remarked this truth.

IF THE reform movement in New York City decides (as I believe it has) to pick up the pieces and lay them down straight in two different piles, then the community should benefit substantially from the genuine contribution each faction can make. The "small r" reformers, by clinging to the banner of such men as LaGuardia and Lehman (who in their day were consummate politicians as well as social ameliorators), can accomplish a wide variety of substantive goals that might be loosely defined as liberal, or at least attuned

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to some image of the public good. By accommodating to the world around them even as they attempt to remake it, these reformers will be influential in the choice of important candidates and in the shaping of vital over-all policies. It is surely such an understanding of reform that lay behind Lehman's endorsement, in the recent primary, of William F. Passannante, the incumbent Assemblyman and erstwhile DeSapio man, over Edward Koch, the candidate of the district reform club.

Mr. Lehman, in this battle, saw the importance of honoring a number of old-style political rules. He reasoned that Passannante had a liberal legislative record, that an incumbent always has certain experience and connections that increase his political effectiveness, and that you cannot run any organization (political or otherwise) without maintaining some security and stability of personnel. In the same district, where reform spirit runs hot and high, Lehman was similarly disturbed by the reform club's cavalier refusal to give Jim Farley a place on their state convention delegation (the very same indignity which he himself had suffered at DeSapio's hands, and for which DeSapio subsequently paid heavily). This type of political accommodation seems emotionally possible for the moderate reformers, and it will enable them to get bigger things done.

It was, after all, under the influence of early and more moderate reformers that previously heralded improvement in Tammany occurred. DeSapio himself was certainly a relief from the cruder captains of the past. He understood the new politics very well and tried to woo it with liberal and respectable candidates and even with significant procedural changes, such as the direct primary election of Manhattan District Leaders. But to no avail. DeSapio, like the militant reformers, suffered from the fatal disability of being for the new group, but not of it.

The moderate-style reformers will also take advantage of the trends (such as slum clearance) that are making New York City (and particularly Manhattan) increasingly a middle-class city. They will be in tune with an increasing number of constituents to whom a liberal posture and a secure syntax are overwhelmingly important. They will have the additional advantage of the support of certain powerful allies such as President Kennedy and Mayor Wagner, both of whom feel at home with this group. The newfound freedom that they will obtain by breaking with the more excessive rigidities of "big R" Reformism will help them institutionalize their leadership and parlay it into an effective sector of the party's over-all mechanism.

At the same time, the "big R" Reformers will also have a role to play (if they can refrain from fragmenting themselves entirely by internecine warfare). To them will be left the fight for certain procedural changes that comport easily with their own special tastes and abilities. They can turn their eloquence to such matters as cutting down and controlling campaign expenditures; getting rid of the worst patronage abuses; achieving salaries for the important party posts, so that all contenders have an equal opportunity to participate without financial or moral ruin. In short, it will be possible for them to keep a spotlight on the party and restrain it from becoming too unresponsive, too stagnant or too inbred. It can help keep the second group from descending into mere routine "regularity."

The moral morass and logical labyrinth into which the reform movement has currently fallen may in this way be cleared. Two different forces may well be salvaged — both concerned with the common weal (though differently conceived) and both in keeping with the best traditions of an American society that has always had room for Reformers *and* Politicians, and has always had high hopes that the two need not be irrevocably divorced.

POSSE FOR A VIRUS . . *by David Binder*

St. Petersburg, Fla.

WHEN A VISITOR enters this town, a sense of foreboding overcomes him. It is the place where the nation's old people go to die, just as ancient elephants are supposed to seek some special spot in the jungle as a final resting place. The city has an air of decay about it—for all its flashy motels, wide new boulevards and comfortable-looking bungalows. Perhaps it is the summer heat, or the sticky air, or the occasional smell of the mangrove swamps behind the subdivisions.

This month the feeling of foreboding has been intensified by a mysterious epidemic of St. Louis encephalitis, a noncontagious disease borne by mosquitoes and birds. It has taken fourteen lives among 188 reported cases in Pinellas (St. Petersburg) County. Now the uninitiated visitor, hearing the whine of an insect, wonders about mosquitoes. He sees a bird silhouetted against one of the enormous thunderheads that lower frequently overhead and wonders about the bird, too. A disease carrier? He thinks involuntarily of Albert Camus' description of an Algerian city in *The Plague*.

The visitor's vague fears are shared by hundreds of elderly residents who settled here with hopes of gaining years of life from the warmth and the unpolluted air of this Gulf Coast peninsula. Since the St. Louis strain of encephalitis, which strikes the central nervous system, is particularly virulent among persons over fifty, the elderly have due cause for concern. The median age of St. Petersburg's 200,000 citizens is fifty-three, and the youngest person to

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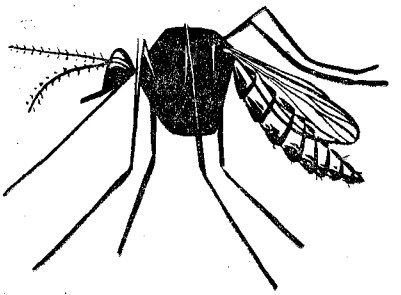


die of encephalitis so far in Pinellas County was fifty-seven.

As a result, fears bordering on panic took hold of many residents during the first two weeks of this month. The near-hysteria was not lessened by several "do something" city officials who ordered massive mosquito-elimination campaigns and — in a city reputed to have the largest wild-bird population of any in the country — a war on local birds. Thousands of citizens began emptying their backyard bird baths and bird feeders. Parks Department employees started trapping ducks and other birds and removing them to cages on the edge of the city.

Meanwhile, seventeen trucks of the Mosquito Control Authority patrolled the streets every night, fogging insect-breeding areas with a lethal mixture that kills mosquitoes more than a quarter of a mile away. The country's fog budget includes 200,000 gallons of an oil-based insecticide for this year; next year, the authority hopes to use 600,000 gallons. Citizens could also obtain free supplies of insecticide for spraying their own property. Many did. But the epidemic toll continued to rise and, by the middle of the month, no plateau was in sight, despite claims to that effect by Gov. Farris Bryant at a press conference staged defiantly in the city dump. (A few mosquitoes whined there, too, despite a massive fogging that had taken place before the Governor arrived.)

THE OLD people telephoned their fears to the County Health Department:

"An owl died last night at Boyd Hill Nature Trail."

"Should I stay on the beaches or leave the county?"

"Is it safe for relatives to come from the North?"

"My child has an ear infection — does that mean encephalitis?"

"Should I take my daughter out of school?"

The fears as well as the confused reactions of the city authorities become more understandable in the context of the unknowns surrounding St. Louis encephalitis, although this is St. Petersburg's third experience with an outbreak in the last four years. The disease was first identified in Paris, Ill., in 1932, and was seen in St. Louis a year later in epidemic form. But unlike other strains of encephalitis, this one was particularly hard to track down, most particularly in its Florida form. Even though it has been intensively studied in the South since 1957, scientists do not know where it comes from, which mosquitoes and birds carry it, and why it appears in certain months rather than others.

For that matter, merely diagnosing the disease may take two to four weeks of serological tests in the laboratory. The symptoms — dizziness, nausea, fever and delirium — are shared with many other afflictions. To this day, physicians in Michigan list encephalitis cases as meningitis, even when they know encephalitis is involved.

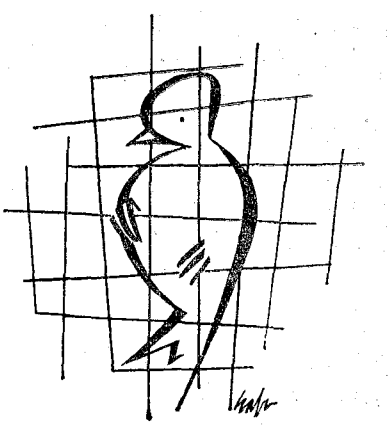
IN THE current Pinellas County epidemic, health authorities have registered just sixty-four cases of laboratory-confirmed encephalitis among the 188 reported instances (more will doubtless be added as results from blood and spinal fluid tests become available). Among the victims who survived there was a wide range of virus-attack intensity. Some had passing discomforts; others went into comas lasting seven days and more. About 60 per cent of the confirmed cases were persons over fifty years old.

Because St. Louis encephalitis has struck three times in such a confined area as Pinellas County, and because of the many unknowns involved in its appearance here, scientists have concentrated an unusual amount of effort in studying the present epidemic. They are engaged in a scientific detective story with scores of suspects and few clues. Their investigators are covering such diverse fields as mosquito behavior, rain cycles, bird movements and wind patterns.

Most of the more than twenty scientists working in St. Petersburg are from the United States Public Health Service's Communicable Disease Center in Atlanta. These are men who have done field work in other encephalitis outbreaks such as one in Hidalgo, Texas, in 1954, and the epidemic in New Jersey in 1959 that took twenty-one lives. There are other scientists from the Florida Health Department's office in Jacksonville and from the state's Entomology Research Center at Vero Beach.

Dr. Telford Work, a virologist from Atlanta, said his team is committed to a line of investigation that would lead to an understanding of the natural history of St. Louis encephalitis, rather than research on possible vaccines. (At present there is no means of vaccinating humans against the virus.) He said this approach was chosen because it seemed more likely to provide practicable methods of epidemic control. He has told visitors that the natural-history study might bring satisfactory results in about two years.

THE MAIN task of the scientists is to isolate the virus in mosquitoes. But which mosquitoes: *Culex Nigripalpus*, with its distinctive black feelers; *Culex Quinquefasciatus*, with its five white bands; *Aedes Aegypti*, the familiar yellow-fever carrier? All are present in Pinellas County. Yet there are so few *Quinquefasciatus* here that this species has practically been ruled out. *Aedes Aegypti* can carry the virus, laboratory tests have shown, but not nearly as effectively as other species. Suspicion lies heavily on the *Nigripalpus*, which is prevalent and an effective virus vector or carrier.



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To find the virus, the scientists must trap batches of mosquitoes. These are then sorted according to species and site, frozen and sent to Atlanta for laboratory analysis. The mosquitoes are ground into what are called virus pools and injected into the brains of suckling mice. When a mouse dies, an autopsy is performed to determine whether encephalitis might have been the cause. Such studies take at least ten days and they are complicated by the fact that many of the mosquitoes have ingested pesticides and are therefore unusable for analysis.

AT THE same time, other studies on mosquito behavior are expected to contribute to an understanding of encephalitis. Dr. Roy W. Chamberlain, also of the Atlanta office, said it is known that the suspect female *Nigripalpus* subsists on blood meals principally from birds and humans. Laboratory tests have shown that the female needs blood every five days or so in order to breed properly. It is also known that the female is highly capable of ingesting the virus from birds and of reinfecting birds. The virus incubates in the mosquito for a week to three weeks, during which time it reaches an infection strength perilous to potential human bite-victims. According to Dr. Chamberlain, the virus apparently bothers neither the mosquitoes nor the birds.

Again the question: which birds? The virologists do not know. So they have been trapping birds throughout the county, taking blood samples for laboratory analysis similar to the mosquito tests, banding and releasing them again. The bird mystery is all the greater since the scientists are not at all certain whether the virus is hosted by domestic species, by migrating flocks, or both. Nor have they made any firm determination on the sequence of the virus cycle of mosquito-bird-mosquito. "It may have been going on for fifty or a thousand years," said Dr. Work. "We just do not know at this point."

At present, the scientists are content to let this "which comes first, the chicken or the egg?" question rest while they pursue more immediate matters.

One theory, for example, is that the epidemic might have been spread by infected mosquitoes blown here from the swampy lowlands on the eastern reaches of Tampa Bay. Evidence for this theory was seen in the prevailing southeasterly winds during the summer and the fact that epidemic cases started first in the center of St. Petersburg (near the bay) and then spread gradually in a northwesterly direction throughout the county.

In addition to winds, there is the matter of climate. A long dry spell followed by heavy rains preceded the current epidemic, whose first case was reported on July 24. Could these conditions have contributed to a sudden increase in virus-carrying mosquitoes? Or birds? The scientists are not sure. Then there is the matter of St. Petersburg's high water table and its lack of storm sewers. (Painted sidewalk signs with the legend, "Vote Dry in November" alluded to a recent sewer-bond issue, not alcoholic beverage sales.) Water stands stagnant in pools along many streets days after the rain stops falling. Perhaps this also aids mosquito breeding and the spread of encephalitis.

One virologist sardonically termed the virus the "bench disease," because of the thousands of pastel-painted benches favored by the city's elderly residents even during the evening "biting" hours of mosquitoes. Possibly bench-sitting is a factor in the epidemic, too.

ALL OF these elements make the epidemiologist's task a hard one. Beyond this, there is what Dr. Donald Quick, from the Communicable Disease Center, calls the "iceberg phenomenon" of encephalitis. He estimated recently that there were perhaps a thousand cases of the virus in the county that went unreported because they were so mild or were confused with other illnesses. Most of these would probably involve younger persons more resistant to this encephalitis strain than the elderly.

Yet it is the hope of Dr. Work and the others that they will be able to establish at least the life cycle of the virus and then perhaps be able to predict epidemic conditions well ahead of time. Such knowledge would permit selective mosquito control instead of the present blanket attacks; and it also might permit the removal of certain host birds, rather than the helter-skelter siege on all birds practiced now by the city. And it might permit truly effective precautionary steps on the part of humans.

NUCLEAR NIRVANA . . *by R. D. Lakin*

FOR SEVERAL years a host of articles have been appearing which propose various solutions to the cold war. Apparently as great a market exists for them as for TV soap operas, patent medicines and religious evangelicalism. There is obviously a good deal of searching for the silver lining in the mushroom cloud. But our magazines and writers have done a great disservice in ignoring a perhaps more select, but certainly not negligible, audience that accepts a different proposition, namely, that nuclear disaster is inevitable; it rejects the wishful thinking—based on absolute disregard of the facts of human behavior—that no matter who or how many individuals get hold of almost total destructive power, no one will ever intentionally or accidentally use that power. The problem faced by the optimistic majority is to make sense out of nonsense; the problem faced by the smaller group is to enjoy life while

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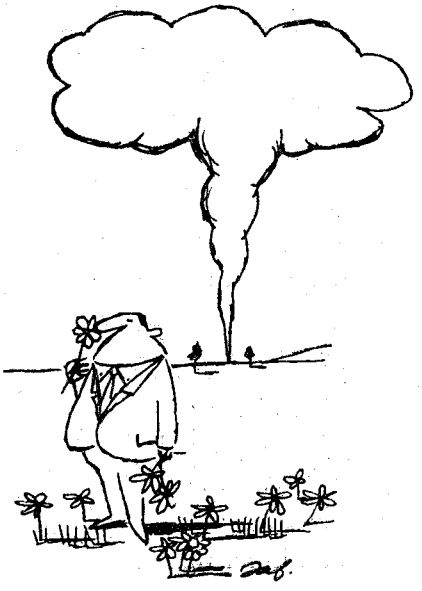
time remains. This latter problem presents a dilemma because knowledge of the impending disaster shreds one's enjoyment hopelessly unless one has taken necessary measures to reduce the ill effects of such knowledge.

It is this smaller audience and their problem towards which now I, as a writer, exercise my responsibility by suggesting a few essential steps in dealing with their dilemma. I can only hope that some conscientious and pluralistic-minded editor will exercise his.

RECENTLY, the Existentialists' notion about the importance of facing up to the fact of one's death has gained wide currency. This is a crucial point for the group to whom I am now speaking—let us call them the "Un-realists." All Un-realists must first expand the basic Existentialist idea of a personal death to the concept of a mass death. Mass death requires greater firmness of mind to contemplate than personal death, because we assume that some things—family, friends, institutions—will survive our personal death and, therefore, that we can live on "spiritually" in them to the extent that we have given ourselves to them. Mass death, on the other hand, implies the end of all—or at least most—of these. In this sense, it is a more ultimate end. For this reason, mass death also makes our existence even more absurd than the more conventional Existentialist notion. The concept of mass death must be burned into the Un-realist's consciousness in order to cast out any lingering delusion that any other end is possible. Once this is effected, the remaining phase of the problem is how to live comfortably and sensibly in the time remaining, like a cancer patient whose prognosis is fatal. The solution, here, involves achieving "Positive Insularity" against this bedrock knowledge.

Positive Insularity must not be confused with "escapism." Escapism is a negative concept that is basically self-defeating, since we must all, to be half-way human, live in this world and not out of it. Escapism smacks of alcohol or drugs, which carry with them far too high a price of rapid debilitation in return for only fitful "escapes" from reality. Positive Insularity requires developing the kind of all-encompassing world for ourselves which is protected against the eroding effects of the knowledge of mass death.

A NUMBER of requisites for the Un-realist follow directly from the necessity to secure Positive Insularity. The first, a rather obvious one, is to divorce oneself from both friends and groups who cling to, and even promote, suggestions that we can somehow avoid mass death. Peace groups, for example, must be anathema to the Un-realist. Throwing oneself into contact with such people can do nothing more than reactivate yearnings for an impossibly different outcome and to create unbearable tensions within one's personality. Persons who promote victory through annihilation are somewhat more acceptable, since they accept and forward the Un-realist's basic tenet of the inevitability of nuclear disaster. But the connotations of "victory," of something ongoing after mass death, must be frowned on as also holding out illusory hopes where none exist, and thus containing the seeds of more strife within the individual. By far the most satisfactory friends and companions are other Un-realists who similarly do not question mass death as the ultimate end. Such acquaintances do not stir up resentments and futile hopes and they go a long way toward providing Positive Insularity.



Still another requisite makes even greater demands on the Un-realist—the need to find a way of life which throws one into the least possible amount of contact with thought of the impending holocaust. After careful consideration and considerable experience, I recommend most highly life in a small Western town, not to exceed 5,000 population. However, this recommendation is offered undogmatically except on the one point of smallness. City life, with its frenzied rush and artificiality, with its nuclear news hawked from every street corner and filling the air waves, with its cultivated jingoism and defense-warning systems, is no place for the Un-realist. The city teems with signs of the approaching cataclysm; it screams most loudly of mass death. The degeneracy accompanying the mass attempt to deny mass death also culminates most violently in the escapist diversions found in the city. In contrast, the small Western town retains an insularity which can only be compared to America between the wars. This insularity, clearly, has nothing to do with actual distance—many small towns lie within the radius of missile nests and other defense installations—but rather with what must be called "psychical" distance. It may be that other small towns in the East or South possess just as much psychical distance, but I rather think that the Western town (and this may be prejudice on my part) gets the nod.

THE SMALL Western town, among its several advantages, still lives in the glory of its mythical past, believing more in the Old Frontier than the New. Wyatt Earp is ever so much more well-known than Dean Rusk. Topical matters of direct import to the news-devouring city dweller scarcely receive a passing comment. Nuclear tests, disarmament negotiations and diplomatic spying are more likely to produce a yawn than a yell. Then, too, the town's problems are still apt to center more on the struggle with nature—water, weather, crops, predatory animals—than with man, a fact that makes the citizenry more taciturn and less curious about the fatal snares man has devised for

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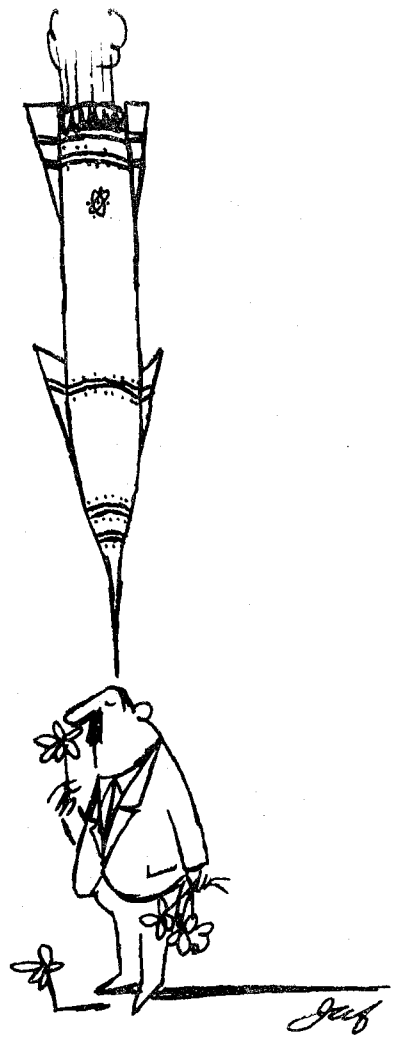
himself. In addition, the surrounding plains and mountains, with their vast permanency, offset the artificial and non-fission-proof constructions, whether of Ozymandias or Zeckendorf.

The very quality of community life in these towns facilitates attaining Positive Insularity. One can become absolutely engrossed in the tax problems, the school problems, the water problems of the community without ever once being brought up against the specter of mass death. And what's more, the possibility of seeing problems actually solved and their solutions brought to completion gives one a sense of fulfillment, of being master of one's fate, impossible in the interdependent complexity of metropolitan problems. All of these factors combine to produce (in my opinion) an unequaled state of Positive Insularity. If one is further willing to dispense entirely with newspapers, radio and TV, then complete Positive Insularity can be achieved.

Of course, I would be willing to admit that some persons of an artistic sensibility would sorely miss the reports of world news. It cannot be denied that for those with a taste for irony, no area is as rewarding as "current events." The artistic soul doubtless draws nourishment, for instance, from the spectacle of man's approaching a landing on the moon at the same time as he approaches making the earth uninhabitable—with the added lure of speculation about which he will accomplish first. For such people the following plan is advised: spend several months in Positive Insularity and then allow a few select publications into your home—preferably weekly or monthly magazines (a daily dosage might destroy insularity). These publications will then have a decided air of unreality about them and can be treated in much the same way as one now treats science fiction and savored for their delicious irony. If at any point, however, complete insularity seems jeopardized, they should be decisively abandoned.

One's personal life in the small Western town can be carried on in much the usual fashion (an outstanding advantage over the life of



the hermit or the monastic or other externally isolated ways of life); but, having once attained Positive Insularity, the small things in life will become matters of pre-eminent value: your child's graduation from grade school (you will not ask "Whither?," being secure already in that answer); your next-door neighbor's fall off a ladder, resulting in a broken leg (you will not measure this against a scale of mass incineration); your own initiation into "Sons of the West" (you will not ask "Will all this grandeur perish?"—the terrain may be somewhat rearranged, but the "West" will endure). And this heightened perceptivity will carry over to the natural surroundings, so that a quiet stroll in the mountains with its discoveries of wildflowers and rock formations and animal life becomes an exciting journey. (This sounds a bit Wordsworthian; we are not interested, however, in impulses from the woods, but in sustaining our Positive Insularity, and it is impossible anywhere else in the country to put so much distance so quickly between oneself and the collective human struggle as by a short hike into a neighboring mountain range.)

As for possible objections, Positive Insularity should not be viewed as appealing primarily to the secular and agnostic. Although religious faith may give the individual hope of a life beyond this world's mass death, it does not in itself give the particulars required for the good life until that penultimate moment in human experience. The program of Positive Insularity already sketched is designed to fill that need for believers as much as for non-believers. It offers full scope for living to the letter of all the fundamental Christian precepts (Jewish and Buddhist as well) without involvement in the nice theological questions about whether one is or is not entitled to shoot one's neighbor in order to maintain one's own life among the nuclear ruins. The Un-realist need reject no orthodoxy except that which denies the certainty of mass death.

Nevertheless, the diversity of human types makes me think it quite reasonable to suggest to those Un-realists with an irrepressible missionary bent the possibility of establishing a series of missionary nuclear-comfort stations in metropolitan areas which would dispense information about Positive Insularity. Preferably, these stations would be staffed entirely by realists and other mercenaries, since the Un-realist's presence in the city would be destructive of his own insularity. But it is not unthinkable that a national Campaign for Positive Insularity might meet with considerable success.

The remaining major objection appears to be a logical one: if everyone tried to achieve Positive Insularity in the manner specified, the plan would obviously break down. This objection can be answered pragmatically—not everyone will. The masses dwell in a daydream of peace composed of highly fissionable materials. Only the few Un-realists reject the daydream in order to live happily and insularly in the radioactive twilight of the human age.

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BOOKS and the ARTS

Bingo Game at the Foot of the Cross

MORTE D'URBAN. By J. F. Powers. Doubleday & Co. 336 pp. $4.50.

William H. Gass

FROM THE start, nearly twenty years ago now, when his writing began to excite the admiration of the readers of *Accent*, it was evident that the stories of J. F. Powers had a very special quality, a rare richness of theme and perception; and, for all their liberal zeal and satirical intent, often an even rarer gentleness of tone. His style seemed equal to all its occasions. Direct and colloquial without being finicky, it was tilted pleasantly toward the conversational, and made its effect with undemonstrative simplicity and ease. By the time his first collection, *The Prince of Darkness*, had appeared, it was evident, too, that he was a master of the short story in at least one of its forms. Moreover, Powers seemed almost immediately to have found, in the vocation of the priest, the subject which was eventually to possess him and draw forth his best; just as he was, with equal readiness, to discover the ideal line to take with it, one that gave him his characteristic fictional "situation."

The trouble with Powers' second volume, for which he kept us waiting nine years, was that his best stories were still in the first one; but this was a petty complaint then, since the collection was very fine, and the title story, "The Presence of Grace," superb. Now, six years later, we have *Morte d'Urban*, Powers' third book, first novel. All told, they've been years of care, of conscious artistry — the repeated exercise of correct choice, harsh scrutiny and continuous revision. Thus I imagine it, for nothing else can account for *Morte d'Urban's* special excellence. The time must have been spent gathering, with a delight comparable to that which Flaubert derived from the gaffs of the bourgeois, those manifestations of our spiritual corruption from which his stories and this novel are principally composed.

Theme, subject, situation, tone — for Powers, they have not changed much as he moves from short fiction to the novel. As he himself described the new book in a recent interview in *The Critic*:

> [It] is about Father Urban being sent to this foundation of the Order in Minnesota. He had been a big-time speaker, a poor man's Fulton Sheen. He was suddenly sent up here to this white elephant, not as the rector, but as one of the boys, one of the three priests. That's my story, what he did there, how he tried to put the place on its feet, how he worked as a common workman — because that was the rector's idea about everything, saving string; the pound-foolish, penny-wise kind of rector. Father Urban is not that kind of man. He's what used to be called the Pullman type, now the type with the attaché case, doing lots of good and instilling a feeling in the young men in the novitiate. Father Urban was trying to develop something special for the Clementines. What it was, he was not sure — a kind of opportunism, I would say.

POWERS' theme remains truly haunting; it is one that might be framed as a question: how can the spirit express itself in nature without compromise, without debasement, since one is so distant from the other, and each is obedient to different laws? Again: can a mind manipulate its body without becoming its body first? Or: is it possible for the church to do its work in the world without becoming completely worldly itself? And there are a hundred other ways to put it. In "Lions, Harts, Leaping Does," Powers' most beautiful story, the Franciscan priest, Didymus, is finally able to feel the truth he has so long bowed his head to, that "in trivial attachments, in love of things, was death, no matter the appearance of life. In the highest attachment only, no matter the appearance of death, was life." But as Didymus approaches the condition of the saint, wanting "nothing in the world for himself at last," he finds he is still "beset by the grossest distractions. They were to be expected, he knew, as indelible in the order of things: the bingo game going on under the Cross for the seamless garment of the Son of Man: everywhere the sign of the contradiction, and always. When would he cease to be surprised by it?" The mystic, for example, forgets his fellows in his flight toward the divine. There seems to be an obligation laid upon those who follow the Ideal to yield themselves to practice.

Thus the dilemma. There is a perfectly reasonable solution to this paradox in Aristotle, but Catholic writers are seldom long on doctrine, and the most arresting thing about Powers' priests is that they never talk theological shop. A layman will occasionally raise a question; it is always embarrassing. But whatever the doctrine — the appearance remains. The ladies leave their lipstick on the crucifix they kiss. One could regard these smears as testimony of continuing love, but Powers does not choose to and, of course, the evidence is mostly on his side.

YET if Powers' fundamental theme escapes the parochial residence he has given to it, his "situation" is, by contrast, quite definitely fixed and narrowly predictable: we shall see the priest, easy emblem of the fairway, hook heavily into the rough and nearly lose his ball — a new Angelflite, one of a dozen like the original disciples, given anonymously at Christmas in a box of paper grass, balls he's had to fly south, in the anonymous donor's private plane, to strike. Well? What harm? Can't priests, like presidents, play golf?

The position of the priest has always struck many people (mostly Protestants, I suppose) as curious, and Powers mentions this fact in the novel. The priest wears a uniform of spiritual dedication and physical denial, is celibate as though to celebrate it, moves through the mysteries of ritual as if he knew his way there, incanting an ancient tongue — a figure altogether strange to this world. Yet he is permitted to smoke cigars, prefer martinis, improve his game, accept personal gifts and drive about in large cars. If the Catholic Church is to survive and grow and do its work, it must attract wealth, acquire political power, advertise itself, build, train bright ambitious men for the priesthood and put them in effective places; it must, in our competitive world, energetically compete, and to compete it must be heard, it must be chic, it must seem glamorous to the crowd, right up to date. Surely Father Urban would agree, for that is the meaning of his name. Only reasonable. The Protestants are building bowling alleys.

Powers has found the formula for his

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fiction in all this. He regularly sees the priest in a worldly role. The necessity of this role makes Powers' satire kind. The contradiction implied makes his irony deep. Nevertheless it is a formula, for we can feel the force of it before we read, and in great part predict its course before that course has well begun.

A few examples. In one story the relation between curate and pastor is likened to that between landlord and tenant, the particular problem being how the tenant can wrangle a writing table for his furnished room from the store gathering dust in his landlord's basement. In another, Father holds patriarchal sway over a household of women. We are treated to the irony of nuns counting collection money, while Mother nerves herself to ask Father to buy a new stove. ("The stove's all right, Sister. It won't draw properly, is all.") In perhaps the best-known of these pieces, "The Valiant Woman," what would otherwise be a dreary cliché of married life becomes deliciously comic when the participants are housekeeper and priest. They even play honeymoon bridge.

NOT only does the formula, the particular "situation," give these stories their form, it supplies the details too, and Powers is immensely gifted at filling every corner of his picture with ironies. Father Ernest Burner, the fat prince of "The Prince of Darkness," to my mind the finest of the stories of this kind, is cast as a time-server in a large corporation hoping for a transfer that will mean a promotion. A victim, principally, of sloth (though all the notable sins are his in one way or another), he receives a demotion instead. Burner golfs, of course, and in his room he practices putting through his clerical collar. (Father Urban is constantly mislaying his.) Driving to his flying lessons (he is, we must remember, the fallen angel), Father Burner's trousers feel uncomfortably tight. He tugs "viciously at both knees, loosening the binding black cloth, easing the seat." So in every line: the apt symbolism, the rich irony, the identical implications. Each time, too, the shock of the contradiction is freshly felt, for instance in the easy vulgarity of the priests' thought and speech, a frequent device of the novel. "Your ass is out, Father," Monsignor Renton says.

But the formula which has served Powers' shorter fiction so well does not lend itself as readily to the longer form. His situations tend to close upon themselves, making the novel a trifle episodic. The writing is astonishingly deft, continuously comic, but Powers is too afraid of being a bore. His formula permits him repeated illustrations of the same theme, yet obstructs any deeper exploration. There's no more here than in "Lions, Harts . . ." or "The Prince of Darkness," where the material is held under greater pressure. It is perhaps the final irony, but I cannot imagine a book in which religious feeling would be more conspicuously absent (though I may mistake the emotion), or one whose artistry would make its compromises with the world with better grace.

Murder at Alton

TIDE WITHOUT TURNING: Elijah P. Lovejoy and Freedom of the Press. By John Gill. Starr King Press. Distributed by The Beacon Press. 256 pp. $4.50.

ELIJAH P. LOVEJOY: Abolitionist Editor. By Merton L. Dillon. University of Illinois Press. 190 pp. $4.75.

Robert Merideth

SOMETIME after 10 o'clock Monday night, November 7, 1837, Elijah P. Lovejoy, abolitionist editor and Presbyterian minister, was shot five times and killed while defending the press of his newspaper, the Alton *Observer*, from an insensate Illinois mob. When the news of what one participant called the "bloody tragedy" at Alton spread to the East during the next two weeks, it "convulsed the continent." Those who lived through it testify that no other personal incident of the anti-slavery struggle impressed the North so profoundly, save perhaps the hanging of John Brown on the eve of the Civil War.

Funeral sermons gushed from pulpits; public memorials and resolutions flooded the papers. At a mass meeting to mourn

ROBERT MERIDETH, who teaches English at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, is completing a biography of Edward Beecher.

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Lovejoy in Boston, Wendell Phillips was moved to make his famous leap onto the stage of Fanueil Hall and into history as the most exciting agitator of his time. The rumor that Edward Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe's elder brother, had also perished, played its part in the genesis of Mrs. Stowe's growth as an abolitionist. Though Garrison deplored Lovejoy's resort to arms and rejection of the doctrine of nonresistance, the American Anti-Slavery Society officially celebrated Lovejoy's heroism, and the membership of local branches swelled. Even Southerners regretted the reign of King Mob in Southern Illinois.

John Quincy Adams thought that Lovejoy's death had breached the Yankee conscience like the "shock" of an "earthquake," that it defined an "epocha in the annals of human liberty." He predicted that Lovejoy's place in history was assured and would "abide while ages pass away." But in fact Lovejoy's image has faded badly, and it is only now, with the almost simultaneous publication of two biographies shortly before the 125th anniversary of his death, that Adams' prophecy seems to be vindicated.

Perhaps Lovejoy has "abided" only faintly until now because, as Merton Dillon is especially good at showing, he contributed nothing new to anti-slavery theory. His significance reposes, rather, in his personal failure and murder. If the role of John Brown (another failure) in the thirty-year anti-slavery drama was that of tragic hero, Lovejoy's was that of martyr. "I know I am but one and you are many," he said in his noblest speech. "My strength would avail but little against you all. You can crush me if you will; but I shall die at my post, for I cannot and will not forsake it." By dying in defense of his press, Lovejoy became the symbol of the civil liberties that the abolitionists were everywhere being denied. He became, in all likelihood, the first martyr to the Bill of Rights. Emerson put his martyrdom in proper perspective when he "sternly rejoiced" not only that someone had been found to die for "humanity," but for "the rights of free speech and opinion" as well. At a time when the principles Lovejoy died for are eroding, we also may rejoice that two scholars have been sufficiently interested in abolition and freedom of the press to write the biography of a symbol.

IF THE focus of such a book ought to be the dramatic detail of Lovejoy's short but vital life, then one must choose John Gill's as the better study. It approaches the form of the historical novel. It gives us Lovejoy as a man in all the complexity and concern of his thirty-five years. But if one requires that the biography of a symbol place its subject in the context of intellectual history, that it analyze and judge, one must then prefer Merton Dillon's biography. Each complements the other, but neither is able to recapture the involvement and the passion of the primary documents on which it is based. Edward Beecher's *Narrative of Riots at Alton* (1838) and the *Memoir* (1838) of Lovejoy by his brothers, to mention only the two most compelling, are better books because they are more engaged books. Indeed, John Gill and Merton Dillon may be the first to hope that their histories will move their readers to return to the fresh, original, contemporary responses to Lovejoy's martyrdom.

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Night Reading

THE CONVERSIONS. By Harry Mathews. Random House. 182 pp. $3.50.

Terry Southern

HARRY MATHEWS is a poet, and his first novel, *The Conversions*, is a classic specimen of the *poet's novel*. In fact, had Eliot written a novel of his own (instead of that preface to *Nightwood*), it seems probable it would have been quite like this one. The narrator, a modest and sensible young fellow, attends a dinner party at the home of Grent Wayl, wealthy eccentric and *amateur*. Afterwards the host draws this guest aside and shows him certain curios from his vast collection of the rare and exquisite — including a golden adz, the blade of which is engraved with seven strange tableaux. He asks the guest to venture an interpretation of the engravings — which depict, or so it seems to the man examining them, the life of a saint, "in a quaint medieval mixture of pagan and Christian themes."

This interpretation evokes a hearty guffaw from the host, and the two rejoin the other guests, bringing the priceless adz with them. "The winner of tonight's contest," the host announces, "shall receive my antique adz." Three of the guests — the narrator, Isador Fod and his sister, Beatrice — are designated to compete. It is to be a race, in which the contestants are represented by worms — of an odd species called *zephers* ("they are dried out, but alive," explains the host, "moisture will quicken them") — moving along parallel tracks of wet salt. The three contestants are given ancient musical instruments — S-shaped wooden tubes known as *serpents* — and each must accompany his worm's advance by sounding notes in an ascending major scale, beginning with the lower *do* and terminating with the higher. "Without this accompaniment," the host continues, "the worm's progress counts for nothing." At the end of each worm's path, in a pool of purple light, is a spider-crab, which eats the worm as it arrives. The narrator is obviously the most musically skilled of the three, but the intricacies of the race are such that it is difficult to say whether it is by skill, luck or the host's design, that

TERRY SOUTHERN is the author of The Magic Christian (*Random House*) *and* Flash and Filigree (*Coward McCann*).

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he is declared winner and carries away the marvelous adz.

A few days later, at about dawn, he is urgently awakened by Beatrice Fod (she who had lost, along with her brother) claiming the adz to be rightfuly hers, insisting upon it, and finally offering impressively large sums of cash to obtain it. Our narrator refuses, and wisely so, since he learns soon after that Wayl has died, and in his will has stipulated that whoever possess the adz and can answer three questions relating to the engravings shall inherit his enormous wealth. The questions are: "(1) When was a stone not a king? (2) What was *La Messe de Sire Fadevant?* (3) Who shaved the Old Man's Beard?"

THE MAIN body of the novel, like an epic poem, is devoted to the narrator's heroic and fantastic endeavor to trace the origin of the adz and to interpret the representations thereon, in the light of the three questions — none of which seem pertinent to the engravings. Does he succeed? Only the close reader shall construe. It is, in any case, a startling piece of work, laced with blue-burning imagery and crystal strands of insinuation. Ludicrous hoax and cabal abound: non-existent footnotes, reproductions of forged mss., sections of scientific and musicologist's esoteria, passages in Greek, Latin, Hungarian, obscure Slavic tongues, gibberish, and an eight-page chapter from a German novel — the translation of which must be closely checked against the original for possible error, that no clue be overlooked. The book is, of course, extremely funny.

Mr. Mathews, it may be said, derives much in his conception from an easy synthesis of Poe and Kafka, though perhaps more directly from Queneau, Borges, and the author of *Locus Solus*, Raymond Roussell. What he has really done, however, is merely to write a novel in the best *poetic tradition*, where image, sound and an abstract interplay of values take precedence. Persons who seek explicit meaning in such novels, or such poems, are seriously misled; scholarly "keys" and "interpretations" notwithstanding, the *intended* meaning behind work of this caliber is nonexistent. Eliot himself, it may be recalled, was disarmingly generous on this point, when he declared during an interview (*Paris Review*, Spring, 1959): "In *The Waste Land* I wasn't even bothering whether I understood what I was saying." Yet this has nothing to do with beauty, or tone; nor does it preclude meaning, but on the contrary, increases its possibility — direct, intense and inevitable meaning—multi-faceted, adaptable as Man itself, and to that same degree, enduring.

The Conversions, then, is not a book to take to the beach, but one to be read at evening, leisurely, by the fireside, through winter nights to come.

FILMS

Robert Hatch

THE JAPANESE director, Kaneto Shindo, has created in *The Island* a film of flawless physical beauty, both in its material surroundings and in the delicately persistent documentation of its camera. The picture gains much of its powerful artistic tension from the fact that it tells a story of grinding hardship against a background of shifting and repeatedly surprising loveliness.

A farm family, father, mother, two sons, lives on a tiny, precipitous island a mile and a half or two miles out in the bay from a small town. The man and wife cultivate the island in terraces to its very summit. Since there is no fresh water out there, they labor like ants from before dawn until after dark in the dry growing season, sculling to the mainland for water, and then toting it — two buckets each on neck yokes — up the tormenting path to the insatiable seedlings. In other seasons, they plow and plant, clear and cultivate the land — it is less exhausting work, merely relentless. The two boys, perhaps seven and nine, help with some of the less taxing husbandry, but mainly they are the housekeepers, running back and forth on the warren-paths of the home site, building the cook fire, bringing the food to a table perched on a promontory above the bay.

The elder son also goes to school on shore (he travels in with his mother on the first trip for water after breakfast, wearing the visored cap of the Japanese schoolboy and on his back a knapsack decorated with a baseball picture; on rainy days he carries a parchment parasol). The husband is square and stolid; with a yoke on his shoulders he has the sureness and slow impressiveness of a bullock. The wife is as lithe as a ballet dancer, delicate in wrist and ankle, trimmed down to boyishness, able to carry out her share of the heavy work only by an exquisite deftness and balance. She is not stolid but impassive.

THE Western viewer is enthralled, not only by the over-all beauty of the picture, but by the elegance of Japanese artifacts and the neatness of Japanese deportment. The great sculling oar of the farmer's scow is put together with the graceful cunning of a samisen, the baskets and buckets are meticulously wrought to their purposes, the yoke is shaped and balanced to give it a kind of inanimate vitality, giant chopsticks are twirled to drag fertilizing kelp from the shallow water. The man and woman use these implements with an economical

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grace that approaches ritual. At the same time, it is puzzling that they take no steps to lighten their work in any significant way. Why do they carry only four buckets on the long trips to and from the shore; why do they build no cistern to trap the heavy seasonal downpours (in one scene the wife is filling her buckets from the spring as she stands in a drenching rain); why do they not fit secure steps into the cliffside? They clearly have the intelligence, skill and equipment for such measures.

But the Western viewer will be more puzzled still to gauge the human quality of the family, and this principally because no one ever speaks. The absence of dialogue is meant, perhaps, to enhance the lyric nature of the picture. However, the script has not been fashioned, like a dance or pantomine, to avoid encounters where the absence of speech is peculiar and startling. It is possible, though not likely, that a couple might work together for hours without exchanging even a utilitarian word. It is not possible that they would return to the children whom they clearly cherish with no greeting, or that the two little boys would scamper around together wordlessly. There may be situations so debasing as to rob human beings of speech, but this family does not appear debased at all. It is exceedingly poor and works exceedingly hard, but it is in command of its way of life. When its members fail to speak in situations where speech is inevitable, they seem to be mute or blind. The effect is disconcerting, a fanciness in an atmosphere of crystal clarity.

IT IS difficult, accordingly, to grasp how these individuals feel toward one another. The man is perhaps heavy and dull; yet when the boys catch a valuable fish, his face breaks into smiles of delight, he snatches up his elder son and tosses him playfully into a nearby pool. The family makes an excursion to a nearby city, sells the fish (its intrinsic value is surprising) and on the proceeds eats lunch at a wharfside restaurant and takes a trip up the funicular. They look like respectable peasants on an outing anywhere in the world.

Once the mother stumbles and drops a bucket of the precious water. Her husband snarls and knocks her flat. But later, when the older boy has died, and the woman in a paroxysm of rage and despair, kicks over her bucket and tears at the hated plants, the man looks on in helpless agony — and turns back to the endless ladling. Previously, he had rushed in terror for the doctor, and when it was too late, he went through the moving and beautiful funeral (the classmates, the teacher, a priest came from the mainland in a launch) with quiet and sustaining dignity.

I do not think he is a brute or a fool, though clearly he is enslaved to his life and has chained his wife to his side. But a man who never speaks is like a man wearing a mask — you cannot identify him. Similarly, I cannot in any meaningful way identify anyone in this film. It is not a matter of what they say — I would not care if they spoke in a foreign language or indeed if the picture were a silent — the occasion and mode of speech are what count. In the end, therefore, I was both entranced and baffled by this exquisite, heartbreaking and enigmatic film.

The Weather

Black November holy valley trees,
Spires, churchstones
Cowbells
—It is
Evening.
I am hanging, upside
Flaking, slowly
the snow
having watched, having watched
THE WEATHER
down.

Robert Sward

BALLET

Harold Clurman

THE BOLSHOI Ballet company from the Bolshoi (Great) Theatre in Moscow, now playing a short season at the Metropolitan Opera House, is composed of splendid-looking young men and women.

This is my first comment because it is the first impression I had of them. Not all dancers or ballet companies are conspicuously attractive. The Bolshoi Ballet company is. There is something extremely refreshing about this (no fumes of neurosis emanate from the Bolshoi stage; no pall of minority separateness, strain or affectation) and it may explain in part some of the magnetism which this high-priced ballet season exercises on so many of our citizens. There is a healthy as well as a festive air about it.

The *corps de ballet* is brilliantly trained and moves with a harmonious coordination that appears as much a matter of mood as of discipline. This *corps de ballet* is indeed one body. It gives everything that is done a firm foundation, a feeling of assurance and solidity. There is something symbolic here, as if the ballet were a kind of national emblem — strong, proud, unmenacing.

Thus far I have attended only two of the four programs: *Swan Lake* and *Spartacus*. Several reviewers have indicated that they prefer the company's *Giselle* to its *Swan Lake*. Be that as it may, *Swan Lake* is good enough: it is an exquisite machine!

The American orchestra, under the baton of the Bolshoi conductor Yuri Faier, plays Tchaikovsky's ultra-familiar but still winning score with a coherence of attack, a clarity of articulation and a substantiality of tone that adds more to the occasion than is common in the playing of ballet music. The costumes (though hardly the sets) possess an admirable stylishness that is both crisp and discreet — notably those of the Spanish dance in the ballroom scene of Act 3.

The artistic goal of the Bolshoi Ballet, it would seem, is to combine the forms of classic ballet with a degree of storytelling and dramatic action. On the whole, the Bolshoi tends to eschew the purely abstract patterns of either the traditional or the more modern ballet ensembles. Elements of pantomime are mixed with the basic balletic material. They lead sometimes to rather childish effects of little aesthetic value, but occasionally to moments of genuine theatrical excitement, as in the animal-like death throes of the wounded magician in *Swan Lake*.

The central role in *Swan Lake* was danced on the night I saw it by the company's leading soloist, Maya Plisetskaya, one of the most nearly perfect dancers in the world today. In every respect save one, hers is a consummate achievement. Her arms are a marvel to behold — except that she makes us overconscious of them.

That is a clue to a lack of total artistry. Though I admired and enjoyed the absolute mastery of her craft, Plisetskaya fails to be evocative. There is no poetry in her — not, at any rate, in *Swan Lake*. Her "Odette-Odile" is a great ballet feat; it does not have spirit. She fails to transcend her corporeal material and thus falls short of the true purpose of the dance, as of all art.

THE new ballet, *Spartacus*, has a score by Khatchaturian that is without face or force. It teems with people, costumes and props rendered portentous by posed tableaux in the manner of David's *Ode to the Horatii*: frozen heroic. This is

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Washington columnist Marquis Childs reported on August 10th that at least 20 candidates are running for Congress in a dozen states on a peace platform.

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bourgeois—not to say Philistine—entertainment at its most comically inflated. It is given a sentimentally "social" content by its reference to the revolt of the Roman gladiators and slaves some seventy years before Christ.

If I liked anything in this exhibition it was — as happens so often in similar displays — the model look of the dancers' bodies: semi-nude, not immoderately muscular, with a well-knit smoothness, superbly trim. This physical excellence may well fascinate a Soviet audience. It offers a showy medallion of bodily splendor and sensuous gratification toward which so many must yearn and aspire — or even see as a prospect soon to be realized. There is something obliquely "Roman" here: an image of health and wealth, without "decadence" but also without the inspiration of a real idea, except for what is represented by enthusiastic organization. Someone on the Left might wistfully ask: "Was it for this that we made a revolution?"

THE Ballet Folklorico of Mexico is at the City Center. In keeping with its linguistically hybrid name, it presents a peculiar mixture — characteristic of many constrasting and contradictory trends in the exportable art of contemporary Mexico.

The dances are stiffened with ballet training — a training not altogether compatible with the genius of folk art, though it may lend such art an auspicious look. The last item on the bill, the Christmas number, is simple, free, with a jolly roughness that is truly popular — an effect, in short, that a more formal ballet company could not convincingly match. But other bits smack or Radio City eclecticism; they lack any style that proceeds wholly from either native impulse or mature cultivation. The impression made in these instances is either tame or juvenile. (*La Revolucion* — a number celebrating the revolution of 1910 — is actually insipid.) In general, there is little here which is of true ballet nature.

The ritual Deer Dance of ancient Indian origin is striking. There is a gratifying warmth in the ceremony of betrothal and marriage, a kind of pantomime-procession, which in its simplicity of setting I found visually more telling than some of the gaudier numbers where the costuming had a rather candied and almost calendar-like conventionality.

What pleased me most in this assorted program was the sweet youthfulness of the company (there are many pretty and fine faces among them), a geniality that is quietly infectious, and the music — the singing, strumming and subtle stridency of sound, a delightfully insinuating rhythm — in which all is fused. The smoldering and tragic aspects of Mexican civilization (which is central to a sense of it) are not even hinted at. The over-all effect is an agreeable, safe show of delicately exotic flavor.

3 Chinese Poems

1.

gone apricot snow is not gone
apricot turn
Mount of Apricot not turn
not apricot
is

2.

alone
voice, is stopping, is thatched
thatched over
alone
mountain over alone not thatched alone is not
retreat, is thatched retreat, is alone thatched

3.

turn snow is
voice, over apricot retreat, voice, over not
voice, alone retreat, retreat,
alone turn
voice, retreat, alone snow apricot
is stopping,
voice, is thatched is
voice, over retreat,
snow is retreat, voice, is gone. is mount is not

Jackson Mac Low

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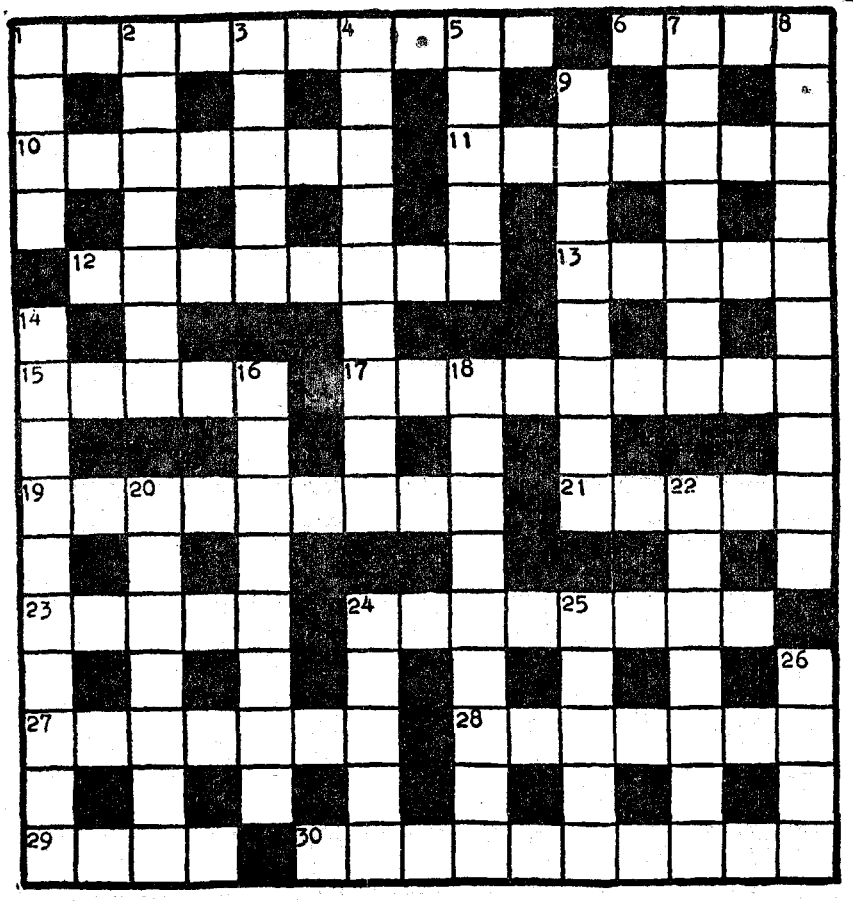
Crossword Puzzle No. 978

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 and 9 down What the local shopkeeper wants to lose is hardly pertinent. (4, 2, 4, 8)
6 See 2 down
10 Where the work of corresponding people ought to be on the right track. (4, 3)
11 How to put bars around our bravery? (7)
12 and 24 across It might be hoped for after a good drive, though it smacks of the Goldwater technique. (3, 5, 8)
13 Power might be a contributing factor. (5)
15 Moses' Miracle Man. (5)
17 You're so correct in your 24 across! (2, 3, 4)
19 Doubts and fears, perhaps. (9)
21 What your machine might do if you hit the bar. (5)
23 What the men of 21 hope to get back to. (5)
27 Form a lariat with it, with the strong part missing. (You certainly won't be stronger with it.) (7)
28 What pool players sometimes hope for at table? (7)
29 19's symbol of disuse? (4)

DOWN:

1 and 30 across Borgia's offer to treat with you? (4, 4, 6)
2, 6 across and 16 down En route, so naturally it doesn't follow. (7, 4, 3, 5)
3 Circular cicatrix obtained by part perfection? (5)
4 Material for the equivalent of a tripod? (9)
5 Pure, as they sometimes advertise of "Lady Chatterley's Lover." (5)
7 Aesop's best precept. (7)
8 Napoleon, for example, has no alternative in following the outcome. (One is not ruffled with it.) (4, 6)
14 One certainly shouldn't have nightmares! (10)
18 It might turn the student blue, or just itself. (4, 5)
20 How at least one of the "R"'s was rolled. (7)
22 Arises in due course to suggest what some vacationers go on. (7)
24 Beginning in style, as a well-remembered spot. (5)
25 The reverse of 13. (5)
26 Hide what your teeth have, according to Wilder. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 977

ACROSS: 1 Put up or shut up; 10 Stipple; 11 Musical; 12 Consonant; 14 Isle of Pines; 16 Insiders; 19 Engineer; 20 Stands; 23 Lost cause; 25 Belabor; 26 Betides; 27 Freedom riders. DOWN: 2 Union; 3 Unpronounceable; 4 One-way; 5 Semitone; 6 Unsophisticated; 7 Unconcern; 8 Isocline; 9 Elms; 15 Log roller; 17 Suspense; 18 Key Largo; 21 Isobar; 22 Sobs; 24 and 22 across Underscore.

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Europe looks outwards

This is Europa at the foot of the Albert Memorial (1872), staring out at the strange world of nine decades later. In August THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT published an important number on the vast extension overseas of the English language and its literature which this century has seen. The issue dated September 21 fills out the picture with a further special number dealing both with the part played by other world languages, such as French and Spanish, and with the wider question of Europe's cultural influence in the world. The Commonwealth? Europe? Politically these may at the moment be rival conceptions, but so far as literature and ideas are concerned both are parts of a larger whole. ●

A dozen problems spring to mind. Is there a revival of Portuguese writing in BRAZIL to match the extraordinary achievements of modern Brazilian architecture? What is the relationship between Spanish literature and the countries of LATIN AMERICA? Can the French literary tradition survive in NORTH AFRICA and the MIDDLE EAST; and what is happening to French-language writing in CANADA, and to French negro writing in BLACK AFRICA and MADAGASCAR? How persistent is the European tradition in ISRAEL? What kind of picture of European literature is available in CHINA? What is the impact of European culture in AUSTRALIA today? Are European influences on the novel in the UNITED STATES as strong now as they were in the time of Melville and James; and is American English the *lingua franca* of the mid-twentieth century?

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